Week ending March 13, 1948 Every Thursday Threepence

JOHN BULL

JUSTICE WITHOUT JURIES?

A Barrister Speaks Out

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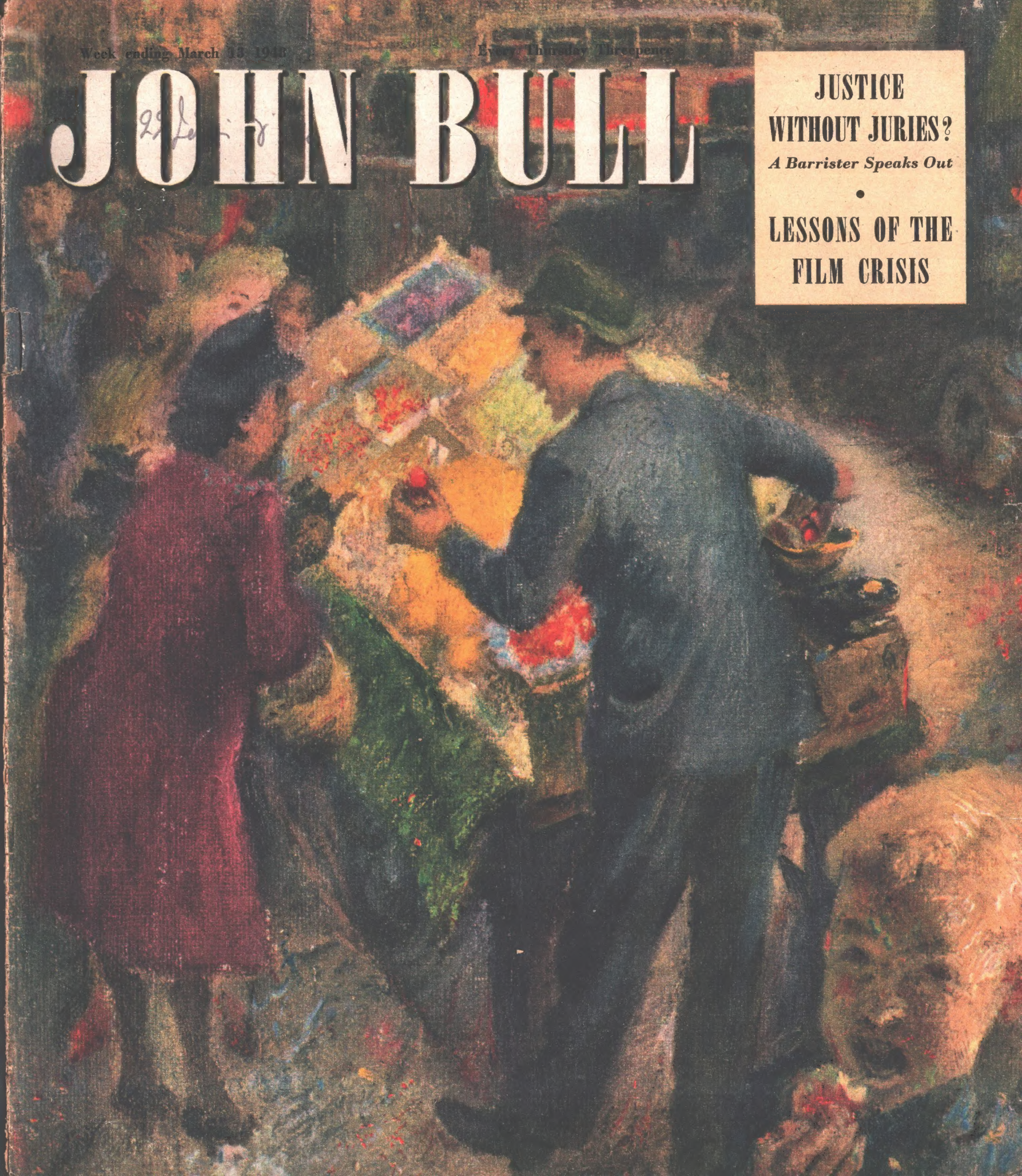
LESSONS OF THE FILM CRISIS



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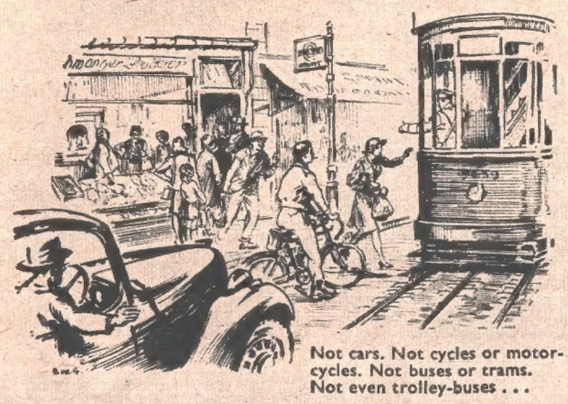

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JOHN BULL

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Keep Our Tempers

EUROPE SPLITS. This fateful spring we can clearly see the "natural" frontier of East and West, and of two different ways of life.

It runs between Sweden and Finland. It splits Germany and Austria in halves, and severs the Czechs from the West. It separates Italy from Jugoslavia, and, south of the Adriatic Sea, cuts off Greece from her Balkan neighbours.

There is no more slack to take up. That phase of the postwar tragedy in which the borderline nations could be manoeuvred into the Communist camp is over.

On the one side of the frontier is the hope of American aid, and a longing to rebuild our lives according to Western traditions of freedom and democracy. On the other side is the Red Army and the new kind of totalitarian régime which inspires a fanatical devotion of its own.

Once upon a time frontiers were fixed by mountains, rivers and seas. This new European frontier is fixed by ideas. And ideas are more important than mountains, more powerful than rivers.

It is therefore our job to see that the conflict between the two great ideas which now divide Europe shall never reach the point of war.

Let us and our European neighbours who meet in Paris next week thankfully accept whatever economic help comes from America in the form of Marshall aid. Let us resolve to use it, not to make life more comfortable now, but to rebuild our prosperity and power as fast as we can.

Meanwhile, we must keep our tempers, never abandon patience, always maintain conciliation while refusing to be driven into appeasement.

Stamping Out the Rackets

ANOTHER GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE is getting down this week to another inquiry into property anomalies and rackets—this time into leaseholds and rents of business premises. It is the third property committee in three years.

This is fine! It's also a needless waste of time and manpower. What useful effect will this new inquiry have? Precisely none. Let's refresh our minds about the outcome of the previous inquiries.

In April, 1945, the Ridley committee—first of the three—came down hard in favour of immediate overhaul of the whole rent system and its controls. One suggestion only was acted on. The furnished rent tribunals system, which had already been working very successfully in Scotland, was extended to England and Wales, with immediate good results.

The other property rackets and swindles were left untouched, to flourish and grow to an outrageous extent, as hundreds of thousands of families have since found out to their cost and discomfort. The excuse was that the Government had no time in which to work out new legislation.

A few months later, the second committee, the Morris, plumped for control of house prices. Again, legislation was far too complicated for these days of Parliamentary bustle. House prices, then already far too high, have since soared into the realms of fantasy.

The Government has turned down two fine chances to stop some of the country's biggest rackets. When it digs out of the pigeon holes the Ridley and Morris reports and does something about them we will believe there is some hope of stamping out exploitation in property. After that the new inquiry will mean something real.

How Honest Are You?

PILFERING OF ALL KINDS of goods in transit by road, rail and water continues to increase.

A committee of traders, transport authorities and police is now working out plans to check the scourge. They had better be good plans, because temptation to petty theft is much greater in times of shortage like these.

We recommend the committee to concentrate on one fact—that goods are far too often left unguarded. On any main road, day or night, loaded lorries stand unattended while their drivers eat and rest in wayside cafés. One of the commonest forms of large-scale theft is simply to drive off a lorry.

Surely it is not beyond the wit of man to tighten up by regulation the parking system at lorrymen's pull-ups?

Many things get stolen when sent by rail. Obviously it must be difficult, when manpower is scarce, to supervise every truck all the way.

But goods sent by passenger train are often exposed to unnecessary risk of theft by being left unattended in casual heaps on platforms.

This helps to turn people of poor moral fibre into petty thieves.

It is all very well for Sir F. Newson-Smith, of the London Chamber of Commerce, to say that pilfering is not peculiar to this country, and that losses are greater elsewhere.

The British have always prided themselves on being an honest and law-abiding lot. We can't afford to backslide. . . .

This Naval Nudity

"DON'T LET 'EM SCRAP the British Navy!" went the old song. A lot of people have been ruefully humming it this year.

It is a novel feeling for us that Britannia should so obviously no longer rule the waves. Naturally, we don't like it. No operational battleships, no big carriers. . . .

But things are not as bad as they seem.

It used to be said that our Service Departments were always preparing for the last war but one. There is evidence that some of them are now more far-sighted.

The lessons of the last war are being applied.

Instead of the old majestic battle fleets, there are to be small, modern ones and a big development of naval aviation.

An enormous navy could be justified by powerful fleets in the hands of rival Powers. But where are they now? Only the United States has a big navy, and no other great naval Power is likely to arise.

So we shall have to get used to the new feeling of comparative naval nudity. After all, the men are still there. Modern sea fighting is so complex that it takes as many men to run a small up-to-date navy as it used to take to run a big old-style one.

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JOHN BULL March 13 1948

JUSTICE WITHOUT JURIES?

by a Barrister-at-Law

Personal bias is not always left out of the courtroom. Sometimes juries acquit the guilty, convict the innocent. Maybe justice would be better left to experts

Law students spend years swotting. Yet jurymen, who decide verdicts, need have no legal training

"MEMBERS OF THE JURY," said the judge a few weeks ago in one of the principal criminal courts of London, "you have now heard the evidence of the prosecution. In my view it is not nearly strong enough for you to be safe in convicting the prisoner, even without hearing his explanation. If you wish, you can stop the trial at this point. Will you just turn to one another and consider the matter?"

The jury conferred and then the clerk of the court asked if it was agreed on a verdict. "We are, sir," said the foreman, rising to his feet, "and we find the prisoner *guilty*!"

Needless to say, the judge refused to accept this verdict; the jury was discharged and another jury sworn; the prosecution then offered no evidence, and the prisoner was released.

This was certainly an exceptional case, but by no means as rare as advocates of the merits of our jury system would wish. Juries often are—let's face it—too inexperienced, too ignorant of matters outside their own private spheres, too much bewildered by the pomp and circumstance of our criminal courts, to be capable of fulfilling the onerous duties laid upon them.

They Knew Their Man

We are frequently told that "the jury system is the fine flower of British justice." Maybe, but even the finest flowers fade and wilt.

Has the jury system outgrown its usefulness? In its beginnings, centuries ago, it was a very different thing from what it is today. Then, apparently, a jury consisted of twelve neighbours of the defendant who could say from their personal knowledge of him and his record whether he was likely or not to be guilty of the offence charged against him.

Thus, Bill Sikes the burglar could scarcely hope to escape conviction when he was caught with a stolen ring in his pocket and explained that he had picked it up in the street and was just going to take it back to the owner. The jury, his neighbours, knew Bill too well to swallow that story.

But today the mere fact that a juryman knows Bill personally is sufficient to disqualify him from judging Bill's case; nor, except in very rare circumstances, is the jury allowed to know until the case is over that the prisoner has a long and picturesque history of ring-stealings. In other words, the modern juryman must come to Bill's case as a complete stranger and, in the words of the oath, "a true verdict give according to the evidence" and nothing but the evidence. The jury system has turned full circle.

There are some obvious advantages about the modern method.

Benefit of the Doubt

The police *may* have arrested Bill Sikes because they know so much about him that they just cannot believe in his innocence at any time, and a jury, judging the facts of this individual incident, may feel that they are not strong enough to warrant a conviction. (Note, please, that, if they acquit Bill, they have not said that he is innocent of the charge; only that he has not been proved guilty beyond reasonable doubt. "Not guilty" in England often means no more than the more explicit Scots verdict of "Not proven.")

And so Bill, to his own delight and to the shocked horror of his more virtuous neighbours, gets the benefit of the doubt. With his long experience of the courts he knows how true the lawyers' maxim is: "If you've no sort of defence, try to be dealt with in the magistrates' courts; they can't give you a heavy sentence. But if you have any sort of plausible explanation, no matter how flimsy —"elect to be tried by a jury. There's always a chance of acquittal with a jury!"

Indeed, though exact figures can't be given, it may be said, without much danger of contradiction, that, of every ten defendants who plead "Not guilty" before a jury, eight are undoubtedly guilty in fact and in law of the offence charged; one's guilt may be dubious, and only one is likely to be innocent. Yet juries will acquit four or five of them.

You may say, and truly, that it is better that four guilty men shall be acquitted than that one innocent man shall be convicted; but what makes you think that juries, who so easily go wrong in one direction, will not sometimes err in the other? That they do is certain.

One great danger lies when the point at issue is the state of the prisoner's mind at the time of the alleged offence. A judge once said, and every judge has repeated his dictum since, that the state of a man's mind is as much a fact (for the jury to decide) as the state of his stomach.

Is either of these states a matter which the ordinary juryman *is* necessarily qualified to decide? You would scarcely be content to accept the verdict of twelve laymen on the state of your stomach; the same twelve men and women, chosen as they are at random, may well be equally incompetent to judge your state of mind at some bygone moment.

And a jury is expected to know the state of mind of, say, a company director who is alleged to have been party to a complicated fraud.

None of the jury may know the first thing about how companies are run, or what precisely are the responsibilities of a director in the defendant's position, or what a man in his position would be likely to do, however innocently, in the given circumstances.

Hard to be Dispassionate

It is not much use for the judge to assure the jury, "You are men and women of the world," when in fact their world is miles removed from that in which the alleged offence took place. Nor is the other invariable compliment always justified, "You did not leave your common sense outside this court when you were called to serve here as a jury," because sometimes, it may be, especially in these years of social stress and racial and political strife, jurymen and jurywomen do bring with them into the box their natural prejudices and their very human sympathies and antipathies.

Imagine—and I take a case which is purely imaginary—imagine a Plymouth Brother of Parsee origin being charged with a violent assault upon a British Fascist in the course of an argument, his defence being that he was acting in self-defence. Is there a defence counsel in Britain whose heart would not rejoice if the jury was known to include another Plymouth Brother of Parsee origin? And

suppose it is the Fascist who is charged and the other who is the complainant: can it be supposed that the Parsee juryman will not be prejudiced from the start, no matter how sincerely he seeks to clear his mind of bias?

Usually there is safety in numbers; the eleven other jurymen and jurywomen may be able to assist their colleague in his endeavours to do justice—but it may be that *he* will sway *their* minds. Juries are human: this is their merit, but it may also be their defect.

"Ah!" says the man in the street, "but an innocent man who has had the misfortune to be convicted by a jury can always appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal."

So he can, but he will be very much mistaken if he supposes that this court will re-try his case. On the contrary, it has stated time and again that this is the very last thing it will do. It will quash a conviction in proper cases where there has been some defect of law at the original trial, or where the judge has by inadvertence misdirected the jury on a material point, but only on the very rarest occasions will it interfere with a jury's finding on the facts.

An Appellant's Chances

"It is not a sufficient ground of appeal," states the standard book (*Archbold*) on our criminal practice, basing itself on past judgments of the Court of Criminal Appeal, "to allege that the verdict is against the weight of evidence. In order to succeed an appellant must go further and show . . . that the verdict is unreasonable or cannot be supported having regard to the evidence. It is not sufficient to show merely that the case against the appellant was a very weak one; nor is it enough that the members of the Court of Criminal Appeal feel some doubt as to the correctness of the verdict. . . . *If there was evidence to support the conviction, the appeal will be dismissed.*"

There have been a few cases when the court has gone beyond this principle. It quashed the conviction of William Herbert Wallace, the insurance agent, who was convicted by a Liverpool jury of murdering his wife in 1931. But this was a case of murder entailing the death penalty. Otherwise it seems more than likely that the jury's verdict would not have been set aside.

After all, if the theory of the infallibility of juries in criminal cases is to be accepted, one cannot expect any appeal court to set their verdicts aside unless law or legal practice has been infringed. And so it comes about that many certainly guilty men go free and that a few almost certainly innocent men go to prison and disgrace, because there is at present no real means of challenging a jury's decision on facts.

Two Possible Remedies

Is there any remedy? Two at least have been proposed.

One is that the Court of Criminal Appeal should in proper cases direct (as the Court of Appeal may direct in civil cases brought before it) that the issue shall be re-tried before another jury. The second jury, which would almost certainly know in advance of its predecessor's verdict and of the Court of Criminal Appeal's decision, might or might not find its task tolerable. Only experience would show if such re-trials were likely to swing towards acquittals or fresh convictions.

The other suggestion is that the jury system should be bypassed—at the demand of the accused—and his case be tried by a court of three or five judges or commissioners who should be criminal lawyers of experience. Again, until such an experiment is tried out, nobody can say whether it would lead to a better administration of justice. Guilty men would rarely escape conviction, it is certain, but would an innocent prisoner, trapped in the snare of circumstances, be assured of an acquittal?

Many lawyers would answer emphatically, "Yes." For this reason alone the experiment is certainly worth trying.

LESSONS OF THE FILM CRISIS

by Connery Chappell

LIKE THE SWINGS at Happy Hampstead, the British film industry goes up and down; one minute it soars skywards, the next it falls just as swiftly. Boom sends it swinging aloft, heading to the clouds. Crisis sends it straight back to earth again.

And so it goes on, year after year; crisis and boom, boom and crisis; triumph and doldrum, always making headlines. Never a dull moment.

A year ago British films were conquering the world. So they said. They were about to earn fortunes in the United States. The Americans were fairly aching to see them. Spectacular plans emerged from the studios around London; the queues in the big towns and the suburbs were all for the home-made article. It was boom—good, old-fashioned Klondike boom. Nobody listened to the prophets and the pessimists, who said that quite a lot of the story was exaggerated.

Now, a year later, the talk is all about crisis. And the blame for it all is put on this film tax, which resulted in the Americans putting a bar up and sending us no new pictures—thus dislocating our film economy.

British productions are being cancelled, too many studios are empty, finance is not forthcoming. The patient is sick and very depressed—and this at a time when there is a bigger demand for British pictures than ever there was, and when British stars like Anna Neagle and Margaret Lockwood are definitely more popular in this country than their American opposite numbers.

It would be easy to be cynical—and to say that the British film industry is basically unsound, and that anybody who is fool enough to put money into it deserves what he sooner or later gets. That would be a very easy line of talk. But it would not be good enough. For a film production industry, surely, is a national necessity. It is a reflection of a country's way of life, like the Press or the radio, and we must encourage it, and get it on a firmer footing.

Fourth Time Down

So these days, with production slowing up and some of the studios staying only half open, mere cynicism is not enough. We must be constructive. We must take the view that if there is to be yet another British film slump—then it must be the last one. The industry must learn from its many mistakes, and as soon as it starts recovering it must recover for good.

How many people realize that this is the fourth

David MacDonald, director, briefs Dennis Price and Linden Travers during shooting of *The Bad Lord Byron*. This is one of the new British films on the way to the cinemas. But we could do with many more

Instead of profiting by the tax hold-up on Hollywood imports, British films have taken another toss! Idle studios when new pictures are in maximum demand points the need for reform. How can we make this the last slump?

major slump British films have had in their short but hectic history of thirty or forty years? The first was during the first World War. The second was in the middle 1920s. The third was the very bad one just before this last war. Now we have a fourth.

At a time when the public wants the pictures, and when the market is wide open to our producers—for at the moment there are no other new films at all—we are unable to expand. We are making fewer pictures than at this time last year. We are incurring financial losses, and we have unemployment in the studios. What a story!

I suggest, then, that it is high time we cut the politeness, ignored the publicity handouts, and got down to the real reasons for the slump.

They won't cure this crisis — but they may prevent the next one.

I am not impressed with the argument that this latest piece of trouble is due solely to the effects of the film tax. That is only one factor. I have watched this industry for twenty years, sometimes from the field itself, sometimes from the touchline. And it seems to me that the trouble is due mainly to much deeper causes.

Here, I suggest, are the four basic reasons why the studios are so uncertain and the City is jittery. They are very simple, but they won't be popular with film people themselves.

(1) The American market has been a mirage which has cost us millions.

(2) Film production costs are profligate. Salaries and expense allowances paid to producers make Cabinet Ministers look paupers, and skilled technical workers in the studios must surely be the highest paid trade unionists in the country. The whole cost of production is geared up in expectation of boom receipts at the box office—and the boom is gone.

(3) Too many of the wrong people are making too many of the wrong films.

(4) British films are not as good as they were two years ago. They have less punch and topicality.

Those are the four reasons. Look at them more closely. Take that American market. We could have built a battle fleet with the money British producers have spent trying to make films for Broadway and the Middle West. They have hardly ever succeeded and it is highly probable, all things being equal, that they hardly ever will.

This attack on the American market is not new. It's been going on for years. Long before the war a most determined effort was made by the Ostrer brothers to force British films into America on merit. The producer was Michael — now Sir Michael—Balcon, who is one of the shrewdest studio men we have ever had. Costly pictures were made —remember *Rome Express*, *The Good Companions* and all those old Jessie Matthews films? Too expensive to make a profit in the British market, the films earned little but polite applause in America. Result: an expensive failure.

Tempted to Spend More

Now we are off again, haring away after the American mirage.

We have one excuse. Picture making has become so expensive that it is very difficult for a man to make a good picture at a cost which would earn a profit in British cinemas alone. There is a great temptation to spend that bit extra, for the better-known players and so on, and hope to make a profit by getting an American release. It sometimes happens—but very, very seldom.

Rank has made the biggest ever attack on the American market. Not only has he sanctioned vast production budgets in the hope of making pictures of sufficient appeal, but he has spent a fortune establishing an organization in America itself, in advertising his films there, and so on.

Knowledgeable people in Wardour Street take it for granted that, except from *Henry V*, which was a prestige success, Rank has not earned anything very substantial from the American market. The persistent refusal to divulge figures colours that theory.

Next, production costs. Before the war we made good British films for £30,000. During the war we made very big ones for £160,000. Nowadays we think we are almost economizing if we make them for £200,000. It is even doubtful whether many of the top present-day British films have been made for that figure. In most cases you can more than double it.

Such costs may have been all right eighteen months ago, but the box office shows signs of exhaustion. Not more than half a dozen films a year return £300,000 to their producers from the British box office, but we are making plenty of films in excess of that price. So we must lose money on them. British studios are living in an inflationary spiral of their own. What is needed is some devaluation.

I know of ordinary feature players—not stars—getting £1,000 for a week's work, production men on contracts of £5,000 a year who kick their heels around and do hardly anything. There are very ordinary script writers on £100 a week—inflated salaries go right the way down through the junior and clerical grades.

I know one front-page flamboyant producer who charges his backers a fee based on a percentage of the production costs of his films—so that it actually pays him to make extravagant, non-commercial pictures. He would earn more risking a loser for £500,000 than by making a possible winner for £200,000.

That is how it goes in the picture business.

Next point: the right and the wrong people. I am afraid we must face up to the fact that too many people with big money to spend in the film studios are arrogantly non-commercial. I know one man who has made a big success and five expensive failures in his last six pictures. He is a darling of the critics and he takes himself very seriously. Some time ago he said to me: "I never go to see American films. They've nothing to teach me. Hollywood is finished." The answer to that sort of talk, of course, is a rude word. It would be funny—if it weren't so serious.

A Question of Quality

Lastly, I believe that British films are not as good as they were a year or so ago. This is not as important as it sounds, for the market is so anxious to get pictures of almost any sort that quality, though important, is not quite as vital as at normal times.

Odd Man Out is now just over a year old. How many films of that merit have there been since then? Was *The Upturned Glass* as good as *Seventh Veil*—and by "good" I mean commercially successful and essentially worth while? We have heard a lot about showing the British way of life, and we have seen plenty of pictures about spivs. But is the quality what it was? I doubt it.

Sooner or later, possibly sooner, the swings on Happy Hampstead will start climbing skywards again, for films are a volatile industry and film people are notoriously optimistic. Next time we have a boom, I suggest, we should do something we have never done before—profit from the lessons of the slumps of the past.

Island Story

As I was walking down a quiet lane recently, the siren sounded at the fire station, calling the men out. Shortly afterwards I met two old ladies, both very frightened. One of them asked me why the siren had sounded. When I explained, she sighed with relief and said: "Thank God! We thought it was the Russians."—*W. P. J. Holt, 92 St. Botolph's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.*

★

They were walking slowly towards the main thoroughfare and his arm was placed protectively round her shoulder. She carried a small bundle.

Reaching the roadway, he held her back and looked carefully left and right before taking the bundle gently from her and guiding her across to the other side. Then he handed the bundle back to her and his arm was again placed round her shoulder as they walked on.

His age was seven, the girl's six; the bundle was the little girl's doll. It did my heart good to watch it.—*H. Cassin, 91 Ten Acres Lane, Newton Heath, Manchester, 10.*

★

While I was on a bus the other day an old lady offered the conductor a pound note for a penny fare. "Is that all you've got?" the conductor asked her with some annoyance.

"No, it isn't," she replied indignantly. "I've got fifty-four more in the bank."—*B. J. Lovell, 12 First Avenue, Lancing, Sussex.*

One guinea will be paid for readers' *personal* experiences reflecting different aspects of life in Britain today. Mark entries "Island Story"

Wearing the woman's skirt, he danced a mad version of the Highland fling.

GRANT'S ROUND

by Travers Hutchin

ILLUSTRATED BY TONY WEARE

Even in a jam, a Highlander is an ill man to cross. But Corporal Green had to learn this the hard way

AS PRIVATE ANGUS GRANT sat in the police cell he was filled with a deep sense of the injustice of life. It was not so much that he resented the fact that he was being held by the civil police of the tiny Wiltshire town of Nether Panter as an absentee from His Majesty's Forces. It was not the indignity of his public arrest at the railway station, in full view of Mary's young brother and sister, that irked him.

When he went to the station he *knew* that he had overstayed his leave by eighteen days. He knew that he was in for a very sticky time when he returned to the depot of the North Highland Fusiliers. He knew that Corporal Green, the bane of his life, would sneer and bully him for months. (How he hated Corporal Green, that miserable Cockney who had somehow emerged as a North Highlander and had even managed to get two stripes while he, a Grant of the Grants, hadn't a single one on his arm.)

But it was the manner of his downfall that hurt Angus.

When he got a forty-eight-hour pass he had genuinely thought that he could travel from the north of Scotland to see Mary in Wiltshire and get back in time—well, almost in time. True, he had only taken a single ticket; but that was because he had not enough money for the return fare. Equally true that he had told Mary he had fourteen days' leave. Oh, yes, he was certainly in the wrong. But to get himself caught by the civil police; to be sitting here waiting for a military escort to take him back in humiliation to the depot—that was what rankled.

Two days before the thing had seemed quite clear. Mary had finally agreed to marry him. He had gone with her family to the races and there won the fabulous sum of £10. He had made up his mind to use it to pay his fare back to Scotland and to face the music and work hard and become a sergeant or something of the kind and get on to the waiting list for married quarters.

If he had gone back of his own free will those things might have been easier. The Old Man would have taken a much more lenient view of his unfortunate absence without leave.

And all because of that wicked notice over the booking office window, which had tempted him and led to his downfall.

"All leave passes must be shown by Service personnel, otherwise full fare will be charged," it had read. Angus Grant had contemplated the words with interest; the fare back to Scotland was nearly £7, and he had bought a powder compact for Mary, which left him with only just enough to pay his way. So he had finally yielded to temptation and produced his old forty-eight-hour pass, hoping that the booking clerk would not be so mean as to notice the date on it.

Everything had appeared all right at first. The ticket clerk had made no comment on his pass. "We don't carry tickets for Scotland here," he had explained. "I'll have to make one out specially for you. Come back in half an hour."

But when Angus returned a sergeant and constable were waiting in the booking office. They had displayed a complete lack of belief in his statement that he was going back to the regiment anyway; and here he was in the cells.

When the door of the cell creaked open he was still brooding. The police sergeant entered, followed by three figures in the uniform of the North Highland Fusiliers. Here was the final injustice. Angus's disgusted look at his escort was not aimed at the neat, bayoneted figures of Private MacIntosh and Private Sutherland. They were old friends. But behind them—and in charge of them—was Corporal Green. Angus Grant felt that his cup of bitterness was full and running over.

"Atten . . . *shun*," snapped Green, in what he, no doubt, thought was a true sergeant's roar, but which to Grant sounded like a feeble whine. For all that, being a good soldier, Grant leaped to his feet.

"Prisoner will proceed to the . . . to the room outside," said Green, concealing his doubt about the wording of his order beneath an air of high importance meant to impress the civil power. "By the left, forward . . . *march*."

Angus marched into the little outer

Continued on page 12

WAVING IN THE MONEY

Even an unobservant husband daren't pass off his wife's new hair-do with "I hadn't noticed." For women, the permanent wave has made a visit to the hairdresser an event; to the trade it's been a windfall

by John K. Newnham

THE TIME WAS 9.30 A.M.; the place, a market town in the south of England twenty-five years ago. A woman walked into a hairdresser's shop and sat down in a chair. The hairdresser, with one female assistant, began to prepare the woman's hair. They continued until lunch-time, when a meal was brought in for the woman from a restaurant.

After the tray had been taken away, the hairdresser produced a heavy iron contraption on the end of an electric flex. The woman's hair was heated slowly, interminably. They brought her a cup of tea. They tried to conceal their nervousness. They went on working through the afternoon.

At 5.30 p.m. they had the job completed. The woman, whose name should be chronicled among the local pioneers, but isn't, got up and examined her head of unfamiliar tight curls. She paid the hairdresser five guineas and went home, exhausted but triumphant after her eight-hour beauty stint. She was the first woman in that district to take a chance on the new "permanent waving," a rather daring innovation which had already caught on in London, where they were paying up to twelve guineas for the treatment.

Today nearly every woman in that district—and every other district in Britain—has her hair permanently waved. Leslie Paling, the hairdresser who anxiously carried out the first experimental job, is still at it. Customers for perms have risen from that first solitary one to fifty a week in his own shop alone.

All over Britain there are 48,000 permanent-waving parlours, establishments, maisons and plain shops, employing nearly 300,000 people, taking something like £200,000,000 a year. Sixty-five per cent of the adult female population have perms regularly; eighty per cent have them at some time or other.

The dozen different types of waving which have sprung up since the French hairdresser Marcel introduced the idea all share steam and chemicals as their main ingredients. A typical treatment begins with the woman having her hair washed and dried. The hair is then sectioned off and rubber pads put close to the scalp.

Secret Agent

The hair is creamed and wound on curlers. The curlers are put into a clamp and a reagent applied. In the secret ingredients of the reagent lie the differences between most of the processes. The hairdresser who applies them seldom knows what they contain. The reagent is always alkaloid, often ammonia.

The better the reagent, the intenser the curls. After it has been applied, a sachet is fitted over the curler and the heat turned on. The reagent steams for anything from three to nine minutes, according to the texture of the hair. The head is then washed, treated with reconditioning cream, and finally set.

The heavy iron contraption which Leslie Paling used twenty-five years ago has been replaced by a lighter chrome model, recently described by a learned judge as "something like a Greek helmet under which a woman sits for an hour or more looking like a telephone exchange." The "hour or more" is usually two or three hours. The price for the treatment will vary enormously, but will certainly be above thirty shillings if the Hairdressers Trade Association has its way.

The Association is out to eliminate the cut-price hairdresser. It claims that he was a major menace prewar, both to the trade and to the customer.

One firm offered perms, settings, and fares paid up to a distance of fifteen miles, for an all-in charge of 10s. 6d. Another offered the same, plus afternoon tea, for 12s. 6d. Free hats were given away to suit the new hair-dos; and in Lancashire you could get a perm, with a fish-and-chip supper thrown in, for five shillings. The work was done on mass-production lines, with the assistant almost on a conveyer belt. The customers were seated in a row of cubicles; the assistant moved down the row carrying out the first part of the treatment, then moved back to the beginning for the next stage.

Perils of the Perm

Since individual tresses require a certain amount of individual treatment, anything might happen, and sometimes did. Scalps were burnt, hair overbaked; the crowning glory turned into a tight Negro frizz, or snapped off in brittle handfuls.

To cope with these professional scandals, and possibly for other reasons, the Hairdressers Trade Association was formed. It has 16,000 members.

The Association aims at fixing not maximum but minimum prices. The suggested lowest scale is: 30s. for permanent waving; 25s. for permanent waving ends; 30s. for dyeing the full head and 15s. for retouching; 15s. for bleaching and 10s. for retouching; 2s. for shampooing; 3s. 6d. for face massage; 2s. for eyebrow shaping; 3s. 6d. for reconditioning; 5s. for haircutting or styling.

Frank Dibiase of Surrey demonstrates "Ancient Aureole" hair style. Many girls prefer to be permed by a man

Annual cost to the average girl will be considerable. Her perm will fall due every nine months, with peak periods just before Christmas and the summer holidays. Shampoos will come fortnightly. She will be lucky if she gets either at the Association's suggested minimum rates.

She will begin having her hair permed at seventeen, possibly fall off temporarily after she is married, but also inevitably return and continue until she is well into the sixties. She will prefer male hairdressers, and often insist on having the same hairdresser each time.

If she is a "Mayfair" type, she will pay from six to ten guineas for each perm, and have one every six months at least. Her shampoo and set will fall due once a week, at a cost of anything from 6s. to 17s. 6d. And she will probably drop in two or three times a week to have the ends combed and dressed. This may not cost her any extra fee, but she will have to leave a good tip. Altogether, she will spend a minimum of £50 a year, even if she doesn't go in for such frills as dyeing, tinting, massage, eyebrow-shaping, reconditioning or high-frequency treatment.

With all this money flying around, hairdressing provides a good job for the earnest apprentice. But it is not a particularly easy one. To the basic technique and the special treatments must be added the art of acquiring the right approach to the customer. On this the tips depend.

Different types of hair present different problems. Some hair will not take permanent waving at all. It straightens out again within a few weeks, which may be due to all manner of feminine complaints, including the ubiquitous lack of vitamins. Special care has to be taken with white hair. The baking is liable to stain it. Bleached hair is so brittle, because of the peroxide, that it will frizz and break easily. But it is far more porous than ordinary hair and can usually be dressed without waving.

How They Train

Training schools with concentrated courses have students varying currently from a young girl of sixteen to a man of fifty. The Trade Association keeps a list of approved schools, but prefers the apprentice system, under which a newcomer has to train for four years before being allowed to cope with customers unaided.

The apprentice begins at 16s. a week, rising to 19s. after the first six months. During the second year she gets a salary increase and graduates from washbowl-cleaning to taking the pins out of an actual hank of hair. The third year gets her even closer to the customer and by the fourth year she will have become an "improver" at 70s. a week.

When she passes out and gets a job in a country town or the suburbs she will rate a salary of £5 a week, plus tips—which is where the customer-approach can help to the tune of another two or three pounds. In the West End she can count on £8 a week, plus commission and tips, bringing the total to an easy £12.

For this, she must keep much more abreast of the tonsorial "new look" than in the suburbs or provinces, where the customers decide which style suits them best and stick to it. But, wherever she goes, she can count on a reasonably assured living, a share of that annual two hundred million pounds, and the certainty that this is about the last non-essential trade from which any Government would have the courage to direct her.

Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Brown look through their holidays-on-the-Broads album. They will be back there Easter time to sail the *Mayfly*

There'll be no holiday poser of what to do, where to stay if . . .

The Family Sets Sail

by John May

WITH SUNLIT wavelets against her bows, the *Mayfly* will sail sweetly down Norfolk's Bure River this Easter, bound on a pleasure cruise, her white sails moving between the reed-thatched roofs of Wroxham's bungalows and boathouses.

Her sleek mahogany hull will pass Horning's waterside pubs and ferry; then, like as not, she will set course for Hickling Broad, where a spanking breeze borrowed from the nearby sea will send her thrumming through the spray with all the incomparable thrill of sail.

Joint Command

Skipper of the *Mayfly* might easily be you or me or the man next door.

In fact, she will be under the joint command of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Brown, of London Town. They have a kind of inland sea fever that sends them annually up to that river-riddled bulge of Norfolk between Norwich and the North Sea, known as the Broads.

Brown, an electrical engineer, first went on the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads as a boy, with his two elder brothers. All three learned sailing on the 200 miles of ample rivers and wide lagoons.

Later, a party of young men went in one boat, and, in a corresponding boatload of girls, Helen, now Mrs. Brown, gained her first experience of the Broads.

This Easter the Browns are taking their three-year-old son, Richard, with them.

The Easter voyage of the *Mayfly* will be pretty typical of several thousand cruises by amateur sailors this season. The Browns will arrive at a boatyard at Wroxham, and will go on board the *Mayfly* right away.

Worth several hundred pounds, she is 23 ft. 6 in. long and 7 ft. 6 in. in the beam. Down below, with cabin top lifted, there is headroom of 5 ft. 3 in. Everyone sleeps and eats on board.

If my guess is right, while the Browns are stowing their personal gear and food ordered from local stores, young Richard will be exploring the cabins. Right forward he will find his own spring berth on the starboard (right) side, a washbasin and a flushing w.c. in a compartment on the port side, with wardrobe space alongside.

Amidships he'll clamber on to the two settee berths in his parents' cabin, and peep out through the sliding windows in the sides. He'll bounce on the piles of blankets and pillows, and probably try to put up the side flaps of the folding table. He'll probably turn on the electric light, if he can reach the switch.

With clothes put away in the drawers under the berths, and food packed into the lockers beneath the seats in the well, the Browns will check over the boat's cutlery, crockery and cooking utensils. They will see that there are supplies of fresh water in the tank, and take a look at the gas stove in its special cooking locker. And then they'll hoist sail and get under way.

Tense Moment

This is the novice's most nervous moment. But the waterways of the Broads are kindly teachers. They give the pupil plenty of exercises, and correct him with only mild punishment.

Cecil Brown's holiday album has a snapshot of one boat which ploughed its way up a soft river bank. The man at the helm had his attention distracted and forgot his job; a moment later his craft had attempted "the overland route." Brown recalls the time when, boasting that it was easy, he made a magnificent leap shorewards with a mooring rope—only to land waist-deep in rushes.

Sail has to be hoisted daily and stowed when evening comes. Making a mooring is necessary at each meal. There is a walk to the nearest farm for fresh milk for breakfast, and another to a waterside inn for drinks at night. After supper, the awning is put up over the boat's open well (where you sit while sailing), and the cabin top is lifted to its full height. Then, rocked in the cradle of the (not very) deep, it's sound sleep till morning.

Kit to Take

The Browns won't want much in the way of special gear. Open-air clothes, rubber shoes aboard the boat, their waterproofs, a warm sweater or two, and towels. The boatyard will be able to fix up Richard with a miniature "Mae West" lifejacket.

Apart from such personal things, all else is provided aboard the boat. Their shallow draught, internal comfort, and simplicity of handling have been developed by generations of Broads builder-owners.

Cecil Brown is a habitual Easter yachtsman. Personally, I favour May or October. One big owner has an annual regatta for his employees *after* the season is finished. And there is an all-year-round Norfolk yacht club of local inhabitants known as the "Frostbites." Given a fair wind, Broads sailing is ideal for a staggered holiday. . . .

What would it cost the Browns to charter their Easter *Mayfly* for a normal week? Outside the busy July and August period when rates are higher, £4 6s. 8d. a week each for the three of them, plus food and fares. On some boats it might be less. Motor cruisers are naturally more expensive.

But when it comes to holidays, they don't have to worry about "digs," petrol rationing, what to do or where to stay.

"Would you like to go sailing?" Mr. Brown asks. "Can we manage it?" counters his wife. It's a pleasant ritual, with a familiar answer.

YEOMAN

"FIRST FLOOR, CENTRE WINDOW," says the voice. "That's where Lady Jane Grey, the nine days' queen—you've heard of her, or will do—looked out and saw her husband's headless body brought back from the place of execution; where she walked out a few hours afterwards to have her head cut off on this spot."

The schoolboys stick their chins out a little more courageously and the schoolgirls, even in these modern times, have difficulty in suppressing sympathetic "Oohs."

The speaker is Yeoman-Warder W. H. Buckland, of the Tower of London. He has been doing the job for twelve years, but does not yet consider himself an old hand—"just in the middle distance." When he's been at it for twenty years he will feel he has really settled down in the job. The present oldest warder took up his duties in 1912.

Thirty-five years in one job is not excessive—except that for this job you need twenty-one years' apprenticeship in the regular Army (see King's Regulations, Appendix XVIII). That you will have the long service and good conduct medal is taken for granted; you also need to have been a warrant officer. Officers are barred, though Chief Warder Cook admits that you may find the odd ex-captain here and there who nearly disqualified himself by taking a commission after holding warrant rank.

When Warder Buckland first arrived, in 1935, he was sworn in on Tower Green as a Special Constable of the Tower, and the other warders drank the newcomer's health to the toast of: "May you never die a warder." As a Special Constable of the Tower, Warder Buckland is responsible to nobody but the resident governor, and the resident governor to the King. The Tower is a "peculiar," free from interference by any outside body, and the policeman on Tower Hill cannot come inside without permission.

The toast refers to the old practice of warders buying their posts. If they retired, they could sell them and keep the money. If they died in office, the governor had the right of selling the post. So, a warder who expired as a warder made, in every sense, a dead loss of up to two hundred guineas.

Privileges Have Gone

Those times have gone, together with other warders' privileges of exacting toll on all wines passing the wharf and the right to maintain their own basket-making shops from an armful of osiers taken from each consignment.

Now, apart from a payment from the War Office for "distinguished military service" at the Tower (which works out at 1s. 2d. a day) and an annual grant of ten guineas for watch-coat, gloves and boots, the wage is £5 a week. At the end of the first year there is a 2s. 6d. rise, and again at the end of the second year.

This extra 5s. covers the cost of quarters, which were formerly free. There is no allowance for fuel or light or rations, but the warders may shop at the Naafi, which keeps down the price of food. They are issued free with their workaday frocks and striped trousers (an economy dress introduced in 1840) and on high days, holidays, the King's birthday, the anniversary of the Accession and similar public occasions they wear State dress — knee breeches and rosettes on the shoes, scarlet and gold on the tunic, a sword at the left hip and a proud white ruff at the throat. Three State dresses are issued each year, which, among the thirty-seven, means that each must last an average of twelve years. Some are still in use after eighteen years.

When Warder Buckland first joined, there were no quarters available in the Tower and he came up each day on the 42 bus from Peckham for two and a half years. Now all the warders are

OF ENGLAND

A job that needs a twenty-one year apprenticeship and another twenty to settle down in. The man who does it features in another article in the series on Other People's Lives • by Hubert Cole

accommodated inside the Tower, but they are a little below strength—thirty-four instead of the establishment of thirty-seven.

The first few weeks for the new warder are spent in learning his job and the way around. Then he gets a test from the chief warder and the resident governor and is passed out as a qualified guide. But taking tourists round is only a small part of the job.

Responsible for Crown Jewels

The main gate must be manned every hour of the twenty-four. Even though Guards sentries take over the other points at night, the responsibility for the Tower is still primarily that of the governor and his warders. All orders for the guard are drawn up by the governor. He is personally responsible for the Crown Jewels, which the warders guard during the day.

After the Crown Jewels, the place which most visitors make a beeline for is the Bloody Tower, though I should hate to say whether this is due to a thirst for historical information, a passion for Stanley Holloway's song, or a repressed desire to use naughty words legitimately. They are usually disappointed, since there is not so very much to see there. Warder Buckland's own preference is for the Beauchamp Tower, with its countless inscriptions and endless associations.

The guide book describes the Constable Tower as resembling the Beauchamp Tower, but having no inscriptions of any interest. With his three sons and three daughters, Warder Buckland lives in the Constable Tower. He hopes it will be his home for a long time to come, because, though he may retire at sixty, his ambition is to die a warder.

He finds it a good life and is a happy man. He came out of the Army with the ability to turn raw civilians into guardsmen and to handle a battalion as a conjurer handles a pack of cards, but, he says, with no other qualifications. Here he has a mess composed of brother warrant officers, a home warm with age, and a job which keeps him interested all the time.

His main enthusiasm is for "these eager young students—you get something from the look in their eyes."

But the people of the past, too, have reality. They are also the main causes of discord, the problem factors of the job. There is, for instance, the affair of the little princes, which springs up from the fifteenth century to bother Warder Buckland.

Mystery of the Tower

Two bodies, thought to be those of Edward V and his brother, were found in the White Tower in Charles II's reign. A Catholic society in 1933 produced evidence that the children were not killed until the reign of Henry VII—thus making the first of the Reformation Tudors their murderer. Then up popped a Protestant society to have the bones disinterred from Westminster Abbey and examined by experts, who pronounced that, from the age of the skeletons at death, the children must have been killed in the reign of Richard III.

So Warder Buckland has to be very careful as he leads his party round the old Norman Keep and prefaces his remarks with "We believe," or "We read," or "It has been said." And that way he does not commit himself or the Tower authorities, and no more religious bones are broken, though I have a strong suspicion that he personally holds Richard responsible and closes his ears to any accusations against Henry.

On ghosts, of course, he can let himself go, because everybody loves a really juicy ghost and that is half the reason they have come to the Tower. "If you want to see one," he tells those eager young schoolboys, "just come up here any night and you'll find plenty." Then, as the eyes open a little too imaginatively under the peaked caps, he adds: "Of course, they wouldn't do you any harm. Just walk right past you."

He himself has never seen any, though he admits that, all alone in the early hours, it would not be a difficult thing to do. "Most of the stories start with the young sentries," he thinks. "Down at the training depot at Caterham the recruit is told he will be going to the Tower and will see *her* there. On his first leave, his dad says to him: 'Now you'll be seeing her, with her head underneath her arm.' And when he does arrive, the old sweats in the barrack room say: 'If you're on main guard, make sure you don't click for number three—that's when *she* walks, between two and four.'"

All of which leads up to the actual incident of the sentry who saw a young woman in white float gracefully over the cobbles only to be suddenly swallowed up in the earth. He did what any sensible man would have done—passed out. And even when he had got clear of the M.I. room he still wouldn't believe that it was a warder's daughter coming home late from a dance in the sergeants' mess and nipping in at the basement door to avoid waking an over-inquisitive father.

Job That Makes Poets

To call an ex-warrant officer with twenty-one years' service a poet is to invite a clout in the ear, yet no man—certainly not Warder Buckland—could walk the paths trodden by history and climb the stone towers drenched in self-sacrifice and ambition, treason and torment and beauty, without absorbing so much of its spirit that it comes out in his speech.

When I first caught up with him and his party of "eager young students," beside the execution site, he was telling them of the seven men and women—three of them Queens of England—who had been beheaded there at the block.

"But one of them wouldn't bow her head," he told them. "She was a grey-haired lady, a fine old English lady, like your grandmother or mine. She said: 'Only traitors bow their heads, and I am no traitor. If you want my head, you must get it as best you can.' And the headsman had to follow her and keep cutting at her until it was finished. Lady Margaret Pole, her name was—and she died on May 27, 1541."

And perhaps in that you may like to see the really important job of W. H. Buckland, one-time drill sergeant in the Coldstream Guards, one-time regimental sergeant-major in the Loyal Regiment, at present a Yeoman Warder of the Tower of London: not shooing the visitors away from the private apartments; nor standing his watch at the Byward Gate; nor even guarding the Crown Jewels; but simply keeping alive after four hundred years the memory and the courage of a fine old English lady who might have been your grandmother or mine.

Yeoman-Warder Buckland and keen youngsters. He has been doing job twelve years; hasn't seen any ghosts

John Bull colour photograph by William Kemp

Continued from page 8

office of the police station. There his money and other belongings were returned when he had signed for them.

"Got a lot of money, Grant." Green's eyes widened as he surveyed the cash that Angus had intended to use to get back to the regiment.

Anyway, they'd have to pay his fare now, Grant thought bitterly. He saw the gleam in Green's eye. Everybody in the regiment knew that the corporal never bought a drink for anybody else if he could help it—and never refused a free one from those few willing to pay. "Mean Green," they called him.

"It's ma ain money, Corporal," Angus replied stolidly. "And I'm no' buying anything for you with it."

Private MacIntosh sniggered. Green whipped round on him. "You keep your trap shut, MacIntosh," he snapped.

AFTER the police handed him over Angus was marched through the streets of Nether Panter, handcuffed to Private Sutherland, for all the world to see his shame. The next train to London was not due for an hour, and Angus and Sutherland were left sitting on the solitary platform seat while Green and MacIntosh went to the "Red Lion."

"I bet MacIntosh is buying most of the beer," commented Angus.

"You'll no' see Green paying, onyway," agreed his guardian. Sutherland felt his position keenly. Grant was a decent lad. Sutherland didn't want it to appear that any lack of friendship made him play the part of escort. "That mon wad no' put his hand in his pocket to buy a wreath for his ain granny's funeral."

"He'll always let other folk pay," Angus was beginning when the return of the corporal and MacIntosh cut the conversation short. There was no further talk until they were in the train.

"What time does the train for Scotland go?" MacIntosh finally asked, breaking the gloomy silence.

"Midnight," grunted Green. "King's Cross at midnight."

"This train gets to London at 5.10," volunteered Sutherland. "It's an awfu' long time to wait. Is there no' a train before midnight. I thought——"

"You're not here to think, Sutherland," said Green. "*I'll* do the thinking for this escort. The connection's at midnight. See?"

Sutherland indicated that he saw.

"If it wasn't for this —— here, we could have a bit of fun," went on Green. (The name he used to describe Angus was one that the Army does not like corporals to use about those below them—or above them, for that matter.) "I could show you hicks some fun, I'm telling you. Expensive, though. London's no place for a mean Scottie, my boy."

Escort and escorted were united in the glowering silence with which they greeted this remark.

"Now, if we weren't on duty. . . ." Green's leer implied that he could have shown them a thing or two.

"You could put me on parole, Corporal," Angus finally said. The two other privates looked round at the mildness of his voice. Green was about to bite Angus's head off when he quickly continued: "Ye see, Corporal, I've got a' that money that I was going to use for my fare, and I'd no' like to be thinking that you've come all this way and have all that time in London and nothing to show for it."

Green's face relaxed as he pondered on this humane thought from the prisoner.

"There's three of us," he admitted, speaking half to himself, half to the two escorting privates. "We could keep a close eye on him, couldn't we?"

They grunted assent. It was clear that they wanted no part in this fraternizing with the enemy that was Corporal Green. Grant must be off his head.

"Aye, I'd no' be able to escape if I wanted to, Corporal," agreed Angus. "And I'd give ye my parole—I'd no' break *that*. But I was just thinking that me having all this money, and it no use to me. . . ."

He let the corporal's imagination finish the sentence.

"I'll think it over," replied Green. Dignity and cupidity were having a fierce struggle for mastery. A little later Angus announced that he wished to visit the toilet. Green sent Sutherland and MacIntosh with him. When they returned there was a faint grin on Sutherland's face. But it quickly disappeared, and was once more its usual impassive Scottish mask.

WHEN the train finally pulled into Paddington, Sutherland pulled the handcuffs, which had been removed on their entering the train, once more from the pocket of his greatcoat.

"I don't think we need to handcuff Grant any more," said Green in a voice that implied that he had earnestly considered whether humanity should not temper stern exigencies of duty. "If he'll give me his parole?"

"Sure and I will, Corporal," said Angus. "I'm no' a man to make trouble for folk who are only doing their duty."

As they were passing through the barrier, Green looked up at the clock. "That train was late," he commented, as if suddenly surprised to discover such a thing about the British railway system. "It's after half past five. Why, they must run it to get in for opening time."

He laughed at his little joke. If the laugh sounded a little forced, nobody seemed to notice it. But Angus rose to the bait.

"Then maybe we could hae a wee drink before we go to King's Cross?" he asked innocently.

"I think that's okay by King's Regulations—as long as nobody knows, who's to stop us?" Green's voice was all honey. "Take off those bayonets, you two. We don't have to look like an escort until we get to King's Cross. There's no need to attract the attention of any so-and-so redcaps that happen to be hanging around."

Five minutes later four soldiers in the Balmoral bonnets of the North Highland Fusiliers entered the "Duke's Head."

"We'll hae four large Scotch and four pints to wash it doon," said Angus. The barmaid was about to say, "No spirits," when she relented and even cracked a little joke, saying: "I'd have thought you *were* four Scotch."

"It's because we send all our good whisky to you, miss, that we have to come all the way to London to get a wee drap for ourselves," explained Angus heavily.

"Ah, all the best whisky and all the pretty girls are in London, aren't they, dearie?" Green put on his best smile, and explained that he was "London bred and born myself, see?"

The four Scotch and the pints were produced. And four more of each; and a third round. For all of which Angus paid. By this time the party was taking on a remarkably merry appearance. So merry that Corporal Green failed to notice that he had himself consumed not four but six of the whiskies. The prisoner had been so thoughtful as to sacrifice two of his own drinks, switching his full glass for the corporal's empty on each occasion.

They left the "Duke's Head" when the barmaid reluctantly told them that the whisky had really run out at last. Her reluctance was due to the fact that Corporal Green had obviously made a deep impression on her not-so-maidenly mind.

"We'll just have a stroll, Rosie," he said on hearing the sad news. "Don't cry your pretty eyes out when we're gone. We'll be back. You can trust the North Highlanders, dearie. Always there when duty or beauty calls."

Rosie forgave the hiccup that accompanied this romantic statement. "Coo, I'd love to see you in a kilt, Sergeant," she said. Green had early told her that he was an acting sergeant and just hadn't had time to sew on the extra stripe.

"My kilt's at the station," he lied. "When I come back, I'll be wearing it for you, Rosie."

Out in the now dark street he swaggered and preened himself. "They've only to *look* at me to see I'm a proper ladies' man."

"You'd look a fine figure in a kilt, Corporal," said Angus, his voice earnestly persuasive. "My, I'd like to see you. It's a pity we've only battle-dress nowadays in the regiment."

Corporal Green agreed; then added quickly: "I know another boozer just round the corner."

"Let's go," suggested Angus.

THE potman was shouting, "Time, *if* you please, gentlemen." The hours since the quartette had arrived at Paddington had been more or less profitably spent. Certainly the spending had been a little one-sided. Angus had several pounds less in his pocket than when he arrived in London. And the escort had a great deal more high spirits inside them.

Corporal Green had made love across the bar to a succession of more or less lovely ladies. To each he had spun the yarn about how fine a figure Sergeant Green of the North Highland Fusiliers looked in his kilt. He fully believed by now that he *had* a kilt.

Angus was enjoying himself in spite of the pain of spending so much money. He had avoided drinking as much as his companions, and his mind was still capable of enjoying the joke, and of improving on it. It was as they were leaving the last port of call—leaving only because the manager was "getting a bit nasty," as Green explained thickly—that his eye fell on the garment.

It was hanging on a hook in a cupboard just inside the sitting-room of the landlord. Angus drew the befuddled corporal to one side and whispered in his ear.

The remaining events of the evening may be told in the words of Sergeant Trivett, of the Metropolitan Police, in the witness box the following morning:

". . . and the accused Green, your worship, was dancing what he described as a Highland fling in the street. He was waving his trousers round his head violently, and striking people in the face with them. When I arrived and took him into custody——"

The magistrate interrupted. "You say he was waving his trousers in the air," he said. "Was the accused wearing no trousers?"

"No, your worship. He was wearing a woman's tartan skirt, which I subsequently discovered had been stolen from a nearby public house. It was the property of the landlady. But, as it was returned, she does not wish to prefer any charge. The other two accused were sitting on the pavement laughing. Laughing most immoderately. A fourth soldier, who did not appear to be intoxicated, said that we could not arrest the accused Green as, if we did so, he would be the prisoner of a prisoner."

The magistrate looked over his spectacles. He had a dim realization that there was something odd about the case, but finally contented himself with saying: "All three fined one guinea for being drunk and disorderly, and one guinea costs between them."

Then, turning to the sergeant: "I presume a report of this will be sent to the men's commanding officer?"

The sergeant agreed that it would.

TWO mornings later, an odd twinkle lurked in the eye of Colonel Cameron when Private Angus Grant appeared before him charged with being absent without leave. ("You're lucky it's not desertion, Grant," the regimental sergeant-major had said.)

"I have decided to take your word that you intended to return of your own accord, Grant," said Cameron. "Indeed, the facts of how you came to be foolish enough to fall into the hands of civilian police seem to substantiate your statement. I think you are a good young soldier at heart. You want to get married, and I don't want to deal so harshly with you that you will be unable to do so. I am therefore going to sentence you to fourteen days' detention—a very lenient sentence, I assure you. I'm only acting in this way because you seem to be . . . shall we say 'enterprising?' The kind of young man I want as a regular soldier in the regiment. I hope you will not let me down again."

"I won't, sir," replied Angus earnestly. "Thank you, sir."

As he was marched out, he saw Green crossing the barrack square. A more humble Green — minus his two stripes.

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Woe! Woe!

FROM the days of Cassandra to our own, the world has always been afflicted with prophets of woe. I think such people (even those of our own time) have never properly understood what makes men and nations great.

For, confounding them all, the world and humanity not only survive but struggle *upwards* inch by painful inch.

"The prosperity of a country," said Martin Luther, "depends not on the abundance of its revenue, nor on the strength of its fortifications. . . . It consists in the number of its cultivated citizens, in its men of education, enlightenment and character: here are to be found its true interest, its chief strength, its real power."

I myself would add that these are not its exceptional men, but the unknown millions who act their daily part honestly. They form true national character.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

THIS WEEK'S COVER

AS he was hurrying along the Strand the other day William Narraway's eye was attracted by a barrow load of golden oranges surrounded by the usual varied swarm of customers. Narraway asked if he could sketch the scene. "Help yourself, mate!" was the barrowboy's genial reply. Narraway's comment: Not unnaturally, street traders hate being classed with "butterflies, spivs and drones." Ministry of Labour's comment: Genuine, long-established ones have little to fear from George Isaacs's direction of labour scheme. Certainly kerbsiders' colourful barrows have their uses and make a brave show in London's drab streets.

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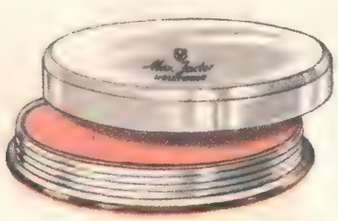

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WALK WITH THE STARS IN
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FREE SPEECH

★ Why Mine Technicians Are Dissatisfied
★ How One Town Plans Its More-Food Drive
★ What's Happened To All The Bones?

MANY AMENITIES AND PRIVILEGES are being offered today to attract mining students to an industry which is very short of qualified men.

From practical experience I can assure the National Coal Board that there will be a grave shortage of qualified technicians unless something is done about existing pay anomalies.

After some years of studying I qualified as a mine surveyor and was immediately appointed as unit surveyor at a colliery producing half a million tons a year. After one rise my money is still 13s. 3d. below that received by a haulage youth of twenty-one whose most difficult job is counting full tubs.

The deputies at this colliery receive £2 10s. a week more than I do for the same hours, and I am not paid overtime rates as they are.—DISILLUSIONED MINE SURVEYOR, Staffs. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Working Class Has Good Taste

Fred Bason

I SELL BOOKS from a barrow in Bermondsey, and from my observations I think the reading taste of the working man is far higher than that of the middle or upper classes.

Works on ethics and philosophy always have a steady sale, and there is a good turnover with poetry and the classics.

Incidentally, I have the largest collection of autographs in the world. In twenty-eight years I have collected 10,967 famous signatures.

One of my greatest failures was Hitler. I tried four times to swap cigarette cards with him.—FRED BASON, 152 Westmoreland Road, London, S.E.17.

Food from Football Field

THE LEADER ON "Potato Policy" (JOHN BULL, February 21) was very timely. Ordinary people can do a great deal towards obviating a potato shortage this year. We in this small town are going all ahead to forestall shortage.

The town football club has voluntarily decided not to play on its own ground in the municipal sports centre so that more potatoes can be grown there. And the borough council is letting all spare land near housing estates for temporary allotments for the same purpose.

We expect to provide enough produce for three weeks' rations for the whole town.—R. ALAN BRUNSKILL, Borough Engineer, Okehampton, Devon.

Crime to Plough Back

WHILE WHOLESALERS OFFER growers 1d. each for cauliflowers, my wife has to pay from 1s. 6d. to 2s. each in the shops. Many growers, fed up with the unreasonable prices that are offered for their produce, are ploughing it back into the land.

In these days of shortage this is a crime, and the Government should sponsor some scheme for the collection and preservation of these foodstuffs.

This must eliminate high profits for in-between men, but ensure reasonable prices for growers.—GORDON H. WAGSTAFF, 172 Trinity Road, Southend-on-Sea.

Profits for In-betweens

AS A SMALLHOLDER, I sent twelve bags of cabbages last week to a wholesaler at Doncaster and received 1s. 3d. for each bag of thirty to forty pounds.

He sold them for 2s. a bag. Yet, in the town I found the retail price of cabbages was 4d. or 5d. a pound.

It is high time the position was reviewed by the Ministries concerned and prices adjusted all along the line from producer to consumer.—H. PALMER, Brodsworth, Yorks.

Grandma Would Be Horrified

HOW HORRIFIED OUR grandmothers would have been by Mrs. R. O. Morgan's suggestion that baby clothes should be "hired out" (JOHN BULL, February 21).

They used to go to infinite pains over baby's elaborate layette, stitching each dainty garment by hand, inserting lace and working exquisite embroidery.

Other times, other manners; but it's a pity the modern world does not permit a touch of tenderness and romance in welcoming its new citizens.—JEAN LEWIS, Brookside, Green Lane, Shepperton-on-Thames, Middlesex.

Birds Protect Their Young

Stanley Willett

JOHN BULL was right to draw attention in a leader to the fact that plovers are becoming extinct (JOHN BULL, February 21), but in my opinion robbers of nests are not altogether to blame.

The harrowing and rolling of fields has a good deal to do with it, and I often wonder if crows, too, do not take eggs. Birds often plan cunning decoys to protect their nests on this 300-acre farm.

Once when I was mowing, a partridge tried to entice me away by pretending it was badly hurt. But when I followed it for some distance it flew away—and I found a nest with young chicks near the spot where I had first seen the bird.—STANLEY WILLETT, Fetton Bank, Middlewich, Cheshire.

Make Murderers Work

APART FROM THE tragic loss of her husband, the widow of a murdered man is faced with the ordeal of keeping herself and her children on a meagre pension.

In such cases the murderer, instead of being hanged, should be put to work in one of the less attractive industries where labour is needed, and his wages given to support the family he has bereaved.—MISS BERYL GOODWIN, 15 Cedar Road, Brigadier Hill, Enfield, Middlesex.

Colour Bar in Trinidad

AS A NATIVE OF Trinidad I fully support Learie Constantine's views in his article "Stumped—by Their Colour" (JOHN BULL, February 21).

As a youngster I lived in the small village of San Francique in southern Trinidad, where we played cricket with bats shaped from the stems of coconut leaves and wooden balls.

Occasionally we were privileged to use a real bat and ball when Master Henry (the son of an English overseer of a sugar plantation) played with us. But his father only allowed him to play on the understanding that he was to be captain.—A. R. MOONCIE, 18 Lower Hastings Street, Leicester.

Mr. A. R. Mooncie photographed with his wife. He recalls childhood cricket in Trinidad

No Secret to Them

SINCE MY DEMOB FROM the Forces I have participated for the first time in a municipal poll. I was amazed to find that it is secret in name only.

My voting paper was numbered and the official who handed it to me called out my electoral registration number to his assistant, who recorded it on the counterfoil of the voting paper.

This system enables the authorities to find out who voted for and against them, and may explain the apparent "indifference" of some electors who do not record their votes.—CHARLES A. WOODTHORNE, 4 West Avenue, Stolie Park, Coventry.

Brainwave Bureau

I HEARTILY AGREE with Kay Smallshaw's recommendations in her article "Home is What You Make It" (JOHN BULL, February 21).

There should be a link between manufacturers and housewives—a central body in London where women could send their suggestions or grumbles about any home commodity on the market.

This would prove a valuable source of information to the experts and stimulate competition among manufacturers to provide what is really needed for successful home-making.—MRS. V. POWDERHAM, 9 Porthkerry Road, Welling, Kent.

Boneless Bovines

M. E. Hewson

HOUSEWIVES have become reconciled to sheep without brains, livers or kidneys; now we cannot get any bones for soup-making. During the recent cold spell my butcher invariably told me: "Sorry, madam, they never have any bones these days."

No wonder women cannot buy decent corsets—they must all be going to the farmers to support these poor, drooping beasts.—MRS. M. E. HEWSON, "Bromleigh," Dunford Road, Parkstone, Dorset.

P.S. On Palestine

Matthew Halton's article "Palestine's Year of Crisis" (JOHN BULL, February 21) posed the apparently irreconcilable differences between Jew and Arab and suggested that whatever steps were now taken, the outcome would be "disaster in Palestine." Here are some readers' views.

IT CANNOT BE TOO often emphasized that the common man in Palestine is not represented by either the Stern Gang or the Mufti.

I once witnessed a gift of seed potatoes by Jews of a communal settlement to neighbouring Arab farmers. Co-operation is possible. The citrus crop is marketed by a joint co-operative board.

On humanitarian grounds alone we must work to prevent the impending tragedy. Even though we are Gentiles and non-Zionists we cannot avoid responsibility for the outcome.—N. POWER, 30 Trosley Avenue, Gravesend, Kent.

Case for the Arabs

THERE IS NO QUESTION about who is in the right in the Palestine problem.

Early in 1917, when the Arabs were hostile to our cause in the Middle East, Lawrence was commissioned by the British Government to win them over to our side and gave them the following solemn promise: "That Great Britain shall support the Arabs in the matter of self-government after the war, in recognition of their support to Britain in the fight against Germany."

Our betrayal may inflame the whole of the East against us.—A. E. WILLIAMS, 111 West Street, Banbury, Oxon.

Barriers to Peace

J. M. Lawrie

THREE IMPORTANT points need to be mentioned in presenting a completely unbiased case.

First: a comparison between the Jewish and Arab contribution to the Allied cause in both world wars.

Secondly: the fact that after centuries of Turkish enslavement the Arabs were freed by Britain and seven states created for them in which to live.

Thirdly: that oil interests in these Arab states, owned by British and American companies have a great deal to do with Arab appeasement, and the dice being loaded in their favour, thus preventing an honest and peaceful settlement between two peoples who racially have almost everything in common.—J. M. LAWRIE, 598 Finchley Road, London, N.W.11.

A Mother's View

A FEW WEEKS AGO my son in Palestine was wounded in the chest and arm. He was inoculated with penicillin every three hours; then, after four days' rest, sent back into action again—on night patrol.

Our boys aren't criminals to merit such treatment. "Disaster in Palestine"? Then let's get out—now.—A SOLDIER'S MOTHER, Sheffield. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Because of space shortage only a limited selection of the many readers' letters submitted can be printed. If your views are squeezed out, it does not mean that they have been overlooked by the Editor. For every letter used, John Bull pays one guinea. Letters should be marked "Free Speech" and carry the full name and address of sender for publication.

Christopher James Geraghty, one of the men hanged for the Antiquis murder. But often, young criminals are merely pawns

CRIME GETS ORGANIZED

Slick, crafty and employing trusted hirelings, a new type of criminal challenges our depleted police force. WILLIAM J. GAGE describes the gang methods and how they can be fought

A VIOLENT PHYSICAL ATTACK is due to be made within the next few weeks on an unsuspecting citizen in your town, along one of your busy streets. The victim will be a man who at regular intervals is responsible for carrying hard cash, lots of it, on his person—a bank messenger or wages clerk.

He doesn't know it, but last week and the week before—perhaps since Christmas—he was "shadowed" on his way to and from the bank. Week by week, he has inadvertently revealed his routine movements to the "shadow" belonging to a crime agency.

One day soon he will be robbed and his attackers will carry out a well-rehearsed getaway. It will be another stage in the process of putting crime on a new basis in Britain today.

The crime wave of 1945-48 is probably the worst in history. At a time when the police are 12,000 men *under* strength, twenty-six murderers are abroad in the land; eighty-seven per cent of burglaries and housebreakings since the war ended have remained unsolved.

Take a glance at the profile of the new criminal. He is one of four different types.

The first is the "known" crook, whose description, methods, associates, fingerprints and photographs are filed away in the rogues' gallery. He commits a crime, goes to jail, comes out, starts all over again using a familiar routine. Sooner or later he will be put on the spot again by the secrets of the police "index system."

The second type is the product of Borstal and approved school, the young "misfit" who drifts back into crime on release.

Then there are the "wayward" types who were called up for military service before they came under police notice, but who had already embarked upon criminal careers in a small way. The rough and tumble of war service has inclined them even more to a preference for the rewards of crime and looting on demobilization.

Finally, there are the 20,000 military, naval and air force deserters who, in the absence of an amnesty, have gone into law-breaking to live.

Working in the Pack

How and when does one of these four types become organized within the larger framework of a crime ring? Who teaches him the rules of working in the pack, the new science of the "counter-investigators" who strike with certainty and success only after long weeks of waiting?

The police know of seven well-equipped gangs, comprising seventy to one hundred men each. The most powerful of them is the "Islington Gang," and, though London is its headquarters, it has branches not only in North, South and West London but also in four country districts within a few miles of the capital. Two of its principals are resourceful criminals who have already served sentences for robbery and banditry.

One is well known in the West End of London, where he is interested in clubs and building properties. The remarkable thing about this man is that though he is the subject of a large file at Scotland Yard under the heading of "Receivers," he has never once been caught red-handed.

Yet since the end of the war he has handled hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of stolen property—from jewellery to tinned jellies. The secret of his success lies partly in the training he has given his hirelings; each of them is thoroughly tested in his own particular sphere, whether it be lorry driving, diamond cutting, as a salesman "contact" or as the actual thief.

This man's gang has in its pay taxi-drivers, private hire car owners, shopkeepers, club attendants and even night watchmen. A staff of specially trained "detectives" is an integral part of the outfit, going into "watching" operation weeks before the victim or the warehouse or shop has been marked down for action.

A significant feature of the main organized groups is that the criminals rarely, if ever, use firearms. The cosh, a piece of thick rubber lined with metal, or the knuckleduster is their weapon. It is in the smaller gangs, which do not enjoy the leadership of old and tested criminals and skilled brains, that the gun is carried and in emergency—as in the Antiquis case—used as the decider.

One of the seven big gangs actually conducts a weekly meeting in which young criminals who are taking the course are instructed how *not* to use lethal weapons; how to inflict a blow from which there will be but slight injury.

The gang provides a "welfare" service for its young operators. It is estimated that two-thirds of the young "unknown" crooks never see the higher-up they work for, and perhaps never know his identity. The youngsters are contacted through an intermediary. They are well paid during engagements and there is a definite understanding that in the event of anything going wrong relatives or dependants will be well looked after. This arrangement is always carried out with honour.

Zero hour for these youngsters is the telephone call that gives them their final instructions on the eve of a job. Ordinary street kiosks are now widely used. The actual thieves, the men who take the real risk of carrying the stolen goods, wait outside a specific call box at a pre-arranged time in the weeks leading up to an operation.

Crime has established a solid bridgehead athwart our communal life. Does the fault lie with the police force?

At this critical period the police force is not only 12,000 under strength, but among junior ranks in the Metropolitan Police Force alone there were 473 resignations last year. London now has the smallest police force on record since 1887.

Young men who were originally anxious to make the police force a career are resigning because their chances of promotion in less than eight years are practically nil; even with a joining wage of £5 5s a week net plus lodging and boot allowance, they cannot afford to stake a future in the force.

A Police Inquiry has been promised by the Home Office. But it may not take evidence or make recommendations until 1950! The Police Inquiry must be held now. With the widest terms of reference, it must sit and probe every angle of police routine. What, for instance, is the truth in the delay behind the replacement of police cars? Some of the cars have run more than 300,000 miles. A large number are out of action.

And what steps are being taken to improve the existing communications between headquarters and patrol cars with two-way radio?

The searchlight must also be brought to rest on the C.I.D. How many plainclothes men today are preoccupied with paper work? Could not police pensioners and "specials" be brought in to carry on clerical and station jobs?

Underworld Squad

Scotland Yard has extended the "Underworld Squad" in recent months. This consists of some two hundred young men and women who patrol West End streets and visit the actual haunts of criminals in order to obtain information. Their "ghost" tactics have extracted important evidence. The squad must be strengthened by suitable recruits at the earliest possible moment.

While on the general work of recommending revision, the inquiry should deal with the anachronism of the police "boundary."

Particularly in the provinces, the officer in charge of inquiries in one police "manor"—the area within a specific boundary—has often to hand over to the officer of another "manor" because the area is bisected by a "boundary." Thus, even in a murder case, a police investigator may still not proceed beyond his "manor" without "express permission."

More police recruits with better conditions; more specialists to foil the organized gangsters; more police equipment. These should be priorities.

Chuter Ede, the Home Secretary, must act now—by announcing the immediate formation of his Police Inquiry. It will be an essential stepping-off point in the battle to come against the criminals who've got organized.

Refusal to adapt themselves to twentieth-century standards is the reason why many churches stand almost empty

Give me a Faith without Frills

I'VE JUST BEEN READING the Bishop of Birmingham's much-discussed book, *The Rise of Christianity*. The most important thing about this book, to my mind, is that it *is* written by a bishop.

There's nothing startlingly new for most of us in his criticisms of some of the Bible stories or in his explanations of how they came to be written.

It's precisely because we ourselves felt compelled to make similar criticisms that many of us now feel unable to belong to the Church.

But when a leader of the Church comes before us and says, in effect, "I, too, no longer believe in those miracles. I, too, have my doubts about the virgin birth and the physical resurrection of Jesus. But, because I believe in the *teachings* of Jesus I intend to remain in the Church" —why then we feel that here at last is a parson with something fresh to say about his religion; something that might make the Church once again a powerful influence in our lives.

For my part, although I've spent most of my life trying to find a satisfactory explanation of why I'm here and what I ought to do while I'm here, and although I've tried most of the popular theories, both scientific and unscientific, I find myself continually coming back, in my everyday problems, to the teachings of Jesus.

Answer to my Problem

I'm not concerned, at such moments, with whether Jesus was a God or a man or just a legend.

All I'm concerned with is an answer to my immediate personal problem—whether I ought to do a certain thing or ought not to do it.

And, again and again, I've been compelled to the conclusion that if I say to myself, "What would Jesus do?" I get the right answer—though, of course, it doesn't follow that I've always got the courage or the willpower to live up to that answer.

Now there's nothing theological about my question. It doesn't involve any supernatural interference. It's a plain, matter-of-fact sort of question—just as I might ask, "What would Marx do?" or "What would Nelson do?"

The difference is that whereas most of the world's great men seem only able to give me a partial answer, good enough for the moment, Jesus so often seems able to give me the whole answer—good for all time.

That, of course, proves nothing, in the scientific sense. It's simply my opinion. But I believe there are many people who feel very much as I do about Jesus. Yet we find it difficult to call ourselves Christians because the churches still insist that we must either accept every word of the Biblical story or stay outside.

Discard Magic Rites

And there, I think, is the real reason why so many churches stand empty today. It isn't because people have lost the *desire* for a religious faith, or because of the Dogs or the Pools, or because "they couldn't care less." It's because the Church refuses to offer us Jesus plain and unadorned in a form that the twentieth-century mind can accept—free from the magic rites and beliefs that many of us think the early Christians inherited from older and more savage religions.

The tragedy of it all, to my mind, is that so much good Christian feeling gets frittered away because so many modern believers in the teachings of Jesus no longer have any common meeting ground.

It's difficult for a man to hold on to his faith in isolation. He needs to be constantly refreshing himself by meeting and talking with others who feel about life as he does. And to start a new church, or what orthodox churchgoers would call a "crank-religion," seems only to make the present confusion worse.

Why can't we have one united Church, where all would-be followers of Jesus, no matter what the extent of their belief in the supernatural, could meet on common ground?

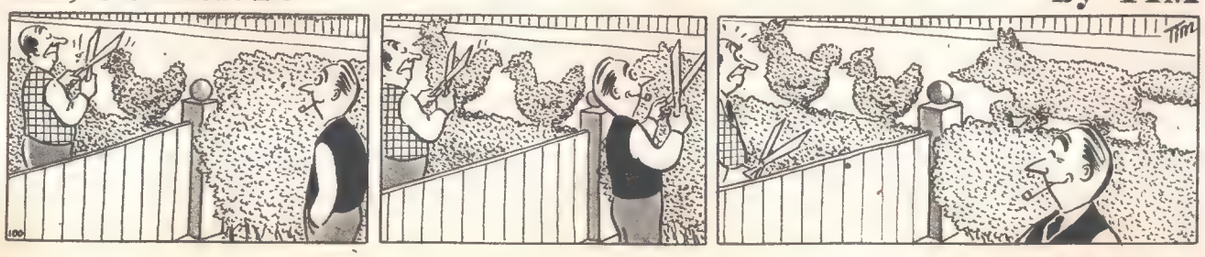
When I listen to the constant exhortations of the parsons, demanding a "change of heart," I want to say to them: "Why not change your Church's heart a bit and meet us half way?"

It's good to see a leading Churchman trying to do just that.

The only thing *I* can find wrong with the Bishop's book is that it costs fifteen shillings and is difficult to get.

If the gist of it could be printed by the hundred thousand and sold at a few pence a copy, and if the Church's leaders were willing to accept its conclusions in the same spirit as the average twentieth-century reader would, I think they might soon find they had the solution to the problem of their dwindling congregations.

OH, JOHNNY! **by TIM**



with my feet up

Listen to the Birds

THE DOVE OF PEACE was flying round in circles. She had just attended a United Nations meeting and was feeling very depressed.

There was a noise like a dive bomber and the Stormy Petrel whizzed by, knocking the little olive branch out of the Dove's beak.

"Squaark!" said the Stormy Petrel. "You look pretty gloomy."

"I've been working too hard," said the Dove of Peace.

"You don't seem to have much to show for it," said the Stormy Petrel. "I hardly work at all and things happen."

"I hate you. You're a horrid bird —always stirring up trouble," said the Dove of Peace.

* * *

"Squaark!" said the Stormy Petrel. "I have a good time and mix with all the rich people."

"I'm welcome everywhere," said the Dove of Peace.

"The only welcome you get is from the common people," said the Stormy Petrel.

"Well, *they* want peace anyway."

"That's because they get killed in war," said the Stormy Petrel. "The people I mix with don't get killed."

"Ha! Ha! Of course we don't get killed!" said a raucous voice. "We get plenty of pickings out of war."

They both looked round to see who the newcomer was.

* * *

There was a slow flapping and the Vulture came up. "Hello, Petrel, old boy," he said. "I always like to follow you around. Where are you going next, Palestine?"

"No. Things are doing nicely there," said the Stormy Petrel.

"Well, personally, I thought I ought to go to Czechoslovakia," said the Dove of Peace.

"Late again," said the Stormy Petrel. "I've finished there for the time being."

"Oh dear," said the Dove of Peace.

* * *

"How about visiting the Falkland Islands again?" asked the Vulture.

"I'm letting that percolate. . . . The Argentine President feels a little song in his heart every time a penguin falls over a cliff on Deception Island."

The Dove of Peace began, "Chile——"

"Yes, below zero," said the Stormy Petrel, which set the Vulture laughing like a yes-man.

"Actually I've decided to pay another visit to Guatemala," went on the Stormy Petrel. "Then I'll flip over the border to the forests of British Honduras."

"I'll come, too," said the Vulture. "They grow mahogany there. I want to see a man about a log."

"Oh dear," said the Dove of Peace. "I suppose I'll have to be there to see what you're doing."

"If you can catch up with us," said the Stormy Petrel.

by Ian Fox

The man in the bowler knew one warning word would finish him

FALSE MOVE

by B. L. JACOT

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

The cocksure young gangster felt confident Old Steve would obey his instructions. So he did—up to a point

THE LITTLE ROOM was planted like a lighthouse in the dark acres of the machine shops, spreading a glow for a limited distance over the rows of high-speed cutting lathes.

A ghostly, empty silence brooded over the stilled machinery, broken now by a muffled tapping at the double windows.

Old Steve looked up leisurely from his work. In all his sixty years he had never been in a hurry. He shifted the watchmaker's eyeglass in one time-grooved motion from the socket of his eye, leaving it to ride his forehead like a horn. He touched a button which released the spring catch on the door.

"What's wrong with you?" he growled.

"I'm wondering where I've got to, mate."

"Shut that door!" Steve snarled. "Want all the dust and abrasive in Wolver on my lathe?"

"Sorry, Dad," the young man said. He closed the door behind him carefully. "I'm new here. I start a shift at 2 a.m. and I'm bushed. Lost my way."

"Plant cleaning?"

"Yep. Assembly line 3." He looked round the spotless little room, double-walled against dust, with its gleaming Société Génèvoise master lathe. "What's all this, mate?"

The old man stretched his elbows and cracked his knuckles, turning on the swivel seat. In spite of his surly look his eye lit up as he fixed his machine. "You don't know much, do you?" he stated. "Ain't much you youngsters *do* know—except dog racing and whistling after girls. This bit of machinery cost eleven thousand quid—and know what it does? It makes the tools that make the tools that make the motor cars we export to satisfy Cripps and the rest of them. See?"

"Go on! You mean—you do?"

STEVE nodded. He was not proof against tribute. He was good at his job. There were few in the country—the world, for that matter—to touch him at his skill, and he knew it. Round these parts in the smoke-blackened Midlands the world had first learned to use machine tools, and the way Steve's kind figured it they still knew more about them here than anywhere else.

"You'd best be getting on your way," he advised. "Nobody's supposed to be round here this time of night. How'd you get in?"

"I saw your light," the boy told him, "and walked in at the far end there. You working staggered hours, too?"

"I'm finishing a job. When we're tooling up folk like me don't watch the clock. Now get along. Follow the rail tracks clear to the end and turn left. That's Assembly 3."

The young man was watching him curiously. He seemed in no hurry to leave this little oasis of light in the deserted acres of the sheds. Old Steve's neck was wrinkled and folded like a tortoise's. There was a gap between shirt band and collar of his overalls, and a further gap between that stringy neck and the shirt band. Everyone knew Old Steve—he had worked up from an apprentice in the old canalside shops at these same works nearly fifty years ago. For twelve years now he had been top man in the machine shops, and it must have been a generation since anyone had seen him without his hard felt hat. It never left his head. It was the mark of his rank like the tabs on a general, or an admiral's gold lace.

"Those are the executive offices, aren't they?" the young man asked. You could just see the shape of the glass partitions at the end of the light streaming out of the master lathe shop. "It would give me the creeps working on here hour after hour alone. I suppose you don't get people round this part of the works much?"

"We get the night watchmen on their rounds," Steve pointed out. "And you'll be in trouble if they find you here."

The old man was thinking: With your hands you've no right in a place like this. They were ham-fisted hands. Fingers all thumbs. Some folk talked about surgeons' fingers, but if you wanted the sort of hands that could—and did—split hairs and work to tolerances of half of one thou., you came to men like Steve. The men who made things.

"Get a move on, son. I've got my work to do."

The young man was peering through the double windows. "The watchmen won't be round for a few minutes yet," he said. "Take it easy."

"I suppose you want them to personally conduct you round to Assembly 3?"

"It might be an idea at that. Keep your shirt on, Dad."

Steve swung round on his swivel stool and pushed to his feet. "Don't you call me 'Dad'," he warned. "And get the hell out of here—d'you here?"

The other looked at the watch on his wrist and grinned. "Don't get all het up, Dad. *Sit down!*" He gave the older man a shove which sent him into his seat. "From now on you're going to do just what you're told."

"Why, you young——" He stopped short when he saw what the other was holding under the flap of his dirty raincoat.

"And shut your big trap."

Steve swallowed. His stomach was turning over at the ugly sight of the automatic. "I'm—not making any trouble, son," he said. "But I don't know what you're after."

"No?" He opened the door without taking his eyes off Old Steve, and whistled softly into the darkness. Then he turned back and waited. "You soon will. We're going to take tomorrow's payroll out of the safe—in there. Provided you behave yourself you won't get hurt. If you're wise you'll sit here and see nothing and hear nothing."

INTO the little room slipped two figures—an old man with shifty eyes and a young fellow in a smart suit with the padded shoulders that stem from London's East End. "Spivs," Steve told himself. "You can tell from the look of their hands."

"All right!" the boy assured them. "He ain't going to talk. He's okay."

"He's had a good look at us, hasn't he?" the older man said. "He could pick us out in a line-up, couldn't he?"

"There isn't going to be a line-up. So what the hell? With him working here the night watchmen give this part a miss. No one to interrupt you. Get going!"

"What about you?"

"I'm staying here, out of sight, under the window here. Keeping an eye on Dad. And he's going to keep the watchmen happy and unsuspicious — aren't you, Dad?"

The two newcomers slipped out of the little room again, disappearing into the darkness round the executive offices. The silence of the night enveloped them, but Steve, as he sat crouched over his precision lathe, could picture them at work on the safe.

"I suppose the watchmen come and have a chat with you sometimes?" the youth queried.

"More often than not."

"Well, tonight you're not letting them inside—see?"

"I never do. I don't like dust in here. They pass the time of night wi' me through the window there." In spite of himself Old Steve's hands were shaking a little. "You're taking a big risk, son."

"There's six thousand pounds in notes in that safe—if you can call it a safe." The boy settled himself closer under the wall. "They'll be talking to you over my head," he said. "They couldn't see me if they tried. So no funny stuff—see?"

"I'm not wanting to die yet. I'm not looking for trouble."

"Just see nothing and remember nothing and you'll be all right. I can get you through the stomach easy as wink from here."

"I tell you I'm not looking for trouble."

"All right, then. I don't *want* to have to shoot my way out. But it's in the plan—if called for."

FOR an age, it seemed, the old man worked at the jig-shaper locked in the jaws of his Jacobs-chuck. He could hear his heart thumping against his ribs. At times things would swim before his eyes and he had to lay off for a while to collect himself again.

"This place is so quiet it gives me the creeps," the boy said. "I suppose that's why they step up to have a crack with you? How long d'you work for?"

"Till I'm finished what I'm on. You can't leave these jobs. If they see I'm still here they walk over and chat for a while to see everything's okay, I suppose."

"Make it natural!"

The old man pulled the glass down

Time marches on!

We've all a job to do, a part to play
To turn our economic night to day.
That's why I ask just now
"Your patience, please.
My own part takes me mainly overseas."

JOHNNIE WALKER

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into his eye socket and bent over his job, reading the micro-gauge before switching on the power again. He was wondering how he would explain later about this man in his room. Would anyone understand what a hold-up felt like? To have an ugly gun muzzle pointed at your stomach? They would ask: "Why didn't you give us a warning? Why did you let them get away with it?"

It wasn't as easy as that. What could he do? What could anyone do?

The time seemed to drag on slowly as they waited. The others would probably have the safe open by now. Soon they would be coming back to pick up this youth. Then—what? Steve was thinking that perhaps they would put a slug into him after all. To make sure. Why stop at murder? If it covered your tracks?—the only tracks you left behind?

The sound of a key in a heavy door broke the silence and the boy crouched on the floor stiffened. "Do your stuff!" he whispered, and the eyes fixed on the older man were like ice.

Steve began to sweat round his tortoiselike neck. It was a cold sweat of fear. He knew he was no actor. He had never acted in his life. As the steps of the night watchmen—they always worked in pairs—approached, he imagined the scene. If he made a slip. . . .

A sharp stab of noise—perhaps two—inside the little room. That would write him off. Then the boy would blast the startled guards at the window. The noise echoing about the empty sheds would bring the others out on the run. But there would be three people who wouldn't hear it. Who wouldn't have any further interest in anything.

They were coming up to the window, now. He tried to moisten his lips. He pressed the release button and the little window opened. He saw the faces of Jenkins and Truell outside, grinning.

"Late again tonight, Steve!" Jenkins said. "I think you love that machine better than your wife."

"Can't answer him back," Truell explained. "How's things, Stevie boy?"

He pushed up the watchmaker's glass and managed to nod back. "Oh, all right." It sounded abrupt, unnatural. He was thinking of the automatic trained on his stomach, a few feet away. "What's moving with you boys?"

Jenkins was sweeping his spotlight round in idle swoops among the rafters. "Usual stuff," he said and yawned. "By the way, that ain't so. You haven't had anyone in with you tonight, have you?"

Steve could feel the tension grip like a steel band, and his heart missed a beat. "With me?" he echoed, playing for time. It was all he could do to keep his eyes away from that gun.

"Charlie Meeks reported spotting someone wandering round, but he lost him down the end there."

Steve caught the eye of the boy with the gun, and he made his decision to play it boldly. "Oh, him!" he heard himself saying in an easy, casual way that surprised him. "That was my boy, Fred. On leave from the Army and having a look round the old place."

Out of the corner of his eye Steve caught a nod from the boy.

"I didn't know he was on leave," Jenkins said.

"Arrived home last night. Unexpected."

"How's he like doing his eighteen months' national service?"

"How would you?" Steve asked. It was coming more natural now. His heart had stopped hammering. But he wished they would leave . . . before he said something silly. Or something else happened.

"Remember me to young Fred," Truell put in. "Fancy!—Fred back. I suppose we'll be seeing him round at the local, though?"

"Trust Fred!" The three men laughed together as if the sudden thought of young Fred passing up a pint of bitter had struck them.

"Well, so long, Steve!" Jenkins nodded. Truell raised a hand and wagged it. They closed the window and Steve breathed again.

"Not bad!" the youth said. "I thought they had you in a tight spot."

Steve was mopping at his brow with his handkerchief. "I didn't know what to tell them," he admitted. "Thank God they've gone!"

"Take it easy, Dad. The others won't be long now. All you got to do if the cops quiz you is to say you saw nothing."

"I won't breathe a word."

The silence had clamped down on them again. He turned back to his lathe but he could not concentrate now on his job. He couldn't see anything except the two faces of Jenkins and Truell. At that window, watching him as he talked. . . .

When it happened it startled him so he almost jumped out of his skin. Suddenly the glass at the back crashed and a voice rang out: "You're covered!"

From the youth slowly rising to his feet with his hands stretched over his head, Steve turned his eyes to the revolver poked through the windows on the other side of the room.

"Take his gun, Steve," Jenkins said, "then touch your release button and let us in to get him."

STEVE took the boy's gun and Jenkins and Truell came round to handcuff him. "Take it easy," Jenkins said. "Your pals are already in the police van. And you're going to join them."

A look of pure hatred passed from him as he was pushed out by the shoulder. He said nothing but there was a venomed question at the back of his eyes.

"Why—you *spiv*!" Steve managed. He felt as if an intolerable weight had been lifted from him. "Threatening me with that gun! Why, as soon as I started talking about a son—me with a *son*!—your number was up. They knew I was trying to tell them something was wrong."

"As if we wouldn't!" Truell laughed, smacking his thigh hilariously. "Old Steve with seven daughters—overborne by womenfolk—and still hoping, eh?"

"Well—you never know," Old Steve argued. The sheepish look soured into disgust as he remembered something. "Him—my son! A *spiv*! With hands like that!"

He pulled the glass down into his eye socket angrily. "Well? Ain't you going to take him away?" he snapped. "Think I want all the dust in Wolver on top of my lathe?"

WRITE TO JOHN BULL ABOUT IT

Woman Who Resigned

AN UNMARRIED WOMAN who has resigned from her job is wondering whether she will be directed into another. She also has some questions to ask about her insurance cards. She writes:

"I was born in June, 1907, and having resigned my job I want to know if I am now free to choose an occupation for myself. If I obtain clerical work on my own account, shall I be allowed to stamp my Health and Unemployment Insurance cards? May I stamp them from the date of giving up my job until I begin work again? And if I become self-employed can I allow the contributions to lapse?"

Until you reach the age of forty-one (in June next) it will be necessary for you to obtain employment through the local Exchange. Should employment be offered to you, and you refuse it, then you are liable to be directed.

But if you work on your own account you need not apply to the Exchange. While doing so you cannot stamp your Unemployment Book, although you can stamp your National Health and Pensions contribution card as from the time of your leaving your last employment.

There is no obligation to stamp your own card, but arrears of contributions would affect your right to receive benefits in a subsequent benefit year.

Our team of experts will solve your queries (except medical) if you send them to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 186 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Domestic problems should be addressed to "Humanist," at the same address. Stamped envelope for reply, please.

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BULLETS & XWORDS RULES

1. First Prize to best *Bullet* received, others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps value 1s. for four *Bullets*, or value 6d. to cover two *Bullets*. Plain paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted only on condition that results of this week's Contests in JOHN BULL dated April 10, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding.

DOUBLE or TREBLE YOUR PRIZE!

TO secure a Bonus that will DOUBLE your prize of £2, £1, 10s. or 5s. this week, enter not fewer than eight efforts. A further eight efforts on plain paper qualify you for a Bonus that will TREBLE any of the 160 such prizes you win.

THAT magic lamp you see in the hands of £1,000 *Bullets* winner D. R. Davies, Pontyclun, Mon., is a real one and his name will be the first inscribed on it.

Invited to make three wishes, this reader and his wife chose a china cabinet, a radio and a holiday in London. To complete his giant award, those wishes are being fulfilled by JOHN BULL.

Now—who is to be next for £1,000 and three rubs at the *Bullets* magic lamp? That coupon below can bring this wonderful prize to *you*.

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "Examples"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

In Britain's Garden
Back To Prosperity
All We Ask
Honest Toil
The Food Problem
Bevan's Remedy
Way Russia's Going
Out Came The Sun And
Bitterly
To Help The Taxpayer
An Accident
Golden Future
Means More
Nobody's Sweetheart
Billing And Cooing
Went Astray
To Father
In The Market
Sickening Thud
Not Quite The Thing

Incomplete "Examples" — see instructions

Short Of.....
How He.....
Next Door To.....
If I Were.....
Out Of The .....
They Don't.....,But

ADDRESS ENTRY

"BULLETS" 1,621 (or XWORD 573) "JOHN BULL," LONG ACRE, LONDON, W.C.2 (COMP.).

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THIS WAY TO WIN

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

If you prefer to make out extra Squares on plain paper, you may do so, but form below saves you the time, trouble and paper involved.

Across Clues XWORD 573

1. In some ways Uno is already proving to be this
3. Is sometimes both cut and made into two
4. Housewives might be in a hole if these struck
8. Most people would agree these should be jolly
11. Many hang about unnecessarily at times
12. Such a place is not so warm to live in
13. For a time young puppy is bit of a drain on

Down Clues

1. Particular one can be upset by too much fine weather
2. You naturally get some these in certain kind of cloth
3. It's lamentable when poor man can't afford this
5. This can be stern
6. Short supplies make a lot of people this
7. Show a reduction for certain seasons
9. Beating may well be suggested by
10. Average man doesn't worry so much today when he loses one

"BULLETS" WINNERS 1,617

FIRST PRIZE, £300 plus Easter Celebration: J. V. Mather, 13 Park View Road, Bolton: MILLIONS LIKE "FEW," BRITAIN'S "WEALTH"

SECOND PRIZE, £25: A. A. Ross, Woodlea, Anderson Street, Newburgh, Fife: RED RUSSIA—CROSS-GRAINED? BUT GRAIN CROSSED!

THIRD PRIZE, £20: F. C. Heywood, 24 High Street, Ironbridge, Salop: WOULDN'T MIND BEEF—BUT ARGENTINE'S "OLD BUCK"——

OTHER AWARDS: £15: D. M. Hook, 13 Anglesey Grove, Cheadle, Ches: THE BIGGEST PIECE—OF WEDDING "CAKE," DOORSTEP. £10: C. Bartholomew, 57 Parkfield Avenue, Hillingdon, Middlesex: HAVING A THIN TIME — FIRE-EATERS — EVERYBODY WARM, FED. £9: W. J. Barnett, 10 Hughenden Road, Oatlands Drive, Slough: RED RUSSIA—WE RESPECT "WITHIN LIMITS." £8: L. R. Rendle, 14 Cray Avenue, Ashtead, Surrey: THING TO REMEMBER —ATOMS *Needn't* SUGGEST SMITHEREENS. £7: G. P. Walsh, 108 Gowan Avenue, Fulham, S.W.6: RED RUSSIA—PROGRESSING, *Bite* BY *Bite*. £6: W. Hunt, 25 Stafford Road, Cannock, Staffs: CATS' CONCERT—THROUGH—SHOE FLEW TRUE!

THREE of £5: J. Butler, 62 College Place, N.W.1.: DIDN'T HESITATE—AND PENSIONS MINISTRY SHOULDN'T. A. S. Harris, 7 Duffryn Villas, Cwm, Ebbw Vale: REAL PEACE — GRANDPA'S — WE'LL MISS "BATTLES." R. Cross, 3 West Acres Flats, Alnwick, Northumberland: CAME THE DAWN AND—RECRUIT REPORTED MISSING SENTRY-BOX!

Fifty 14 lb. Easter Food Parcels and 1,948 "Good Shots" have also been posted.

XWORD 569 RESULT

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Home. 2, Fare or Fire. 4, Faker. 7, Cloak. 9, Wire. 13, Poet. 14, Sale. DOWN: 3, Rues or Runs. 5, Dace. 6, Van. 8, Pick. 9, Word. 10, Fate. 11, Map. 12, Hit.

FIVE £100 SHARERS (differing at one point only from competitors' Answers above): J. Barnes, 151 Lanark Road, London, W.9; Mrs. F. L. Bell, 158 Duston Road, St. James, Northampton; J. H. Jackson, 22 Railway Street, Leyland; F. T. Lowe, 1 Clonmell Road, London, N.17; C.P.O. K. Shipsides, 302 Camden Road, London, N.7. Winners receive Parcels in addition.

Runners-up Award (value £25) shared between 82 entrants (differing at two points only from Answers above).

ENCLOSE 2½d. STAMPED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE for Enlarged SWISS and SEASIDE HOLIDAY "BULLETIN" dated APRIL 3

EXAMPLE .....
BULLET .....
EX. .....
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Closing Postmark,
1,621 MON., MAR. 22

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O. value .....

No. .....

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

WIN A CHEQUE AND BIG SURPRISE PARCEL

1F		R	2C	E	■	■	3P	A						
	■	4G	R	O	■	E	R	S	■					
R	E	G	A	N	■	P	I	S	5A					
M	S	■	■	■	6	■	■	■	■					
■	S	■	K	Y	E	■	E	7F	T					
8	A	R	S	■	A	A	■	■	■					
■	Y	E	■	E	N	G	I	R	9D					
10	■	11F	■	G	■	O	N	E	R					
O	N	E	■	O	A	R	■	S	U					
12B	A	R	■	■	13D	A	■	573						

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with *one* extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.).

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated April 3.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.

573 Closing Postmark MON., MAR. 22

I enclose P.O. value....

No. .....

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

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You can see new, brilliant whiteness smiling back at you from your mirror after a week of using Pepsodent—the toothpaste that has Irium in it. Irium is *exclusive to Pepsodent*—and no more effective tooth-cleaning substance is known to dental science. Softly, gently, *surely*, it emulsifies and washes away the dulling stains and film that hide the pearly whiteness of your smile. It leaves teeth sparkling white—whiter than you can remember seeing them since you were tiny! Use Pepsodent Toothpaste twice a day—see your dentist twice a year.

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H3

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